



BLM-ALASKA FRONTIERS

News about BLM-managed
public lands in Alaska

ISSUE 83

FALL 2001

Cleanup

*Pipeline Preparations
Help Reduce Damage*




Dave Perez/JPO-DNR

On October 4, a gunman fired a bullet that pierced the Trans Alaska Pipeline at Milepost 400 near Pump Station 7. Thousands of gallons of oil began leaking, creating a major incident. JPO information officer Rhea DoBosh was one of the many people sent to the site and filed this report...

LIVENGOOD. It was rainy and cold and muddy and the smell of raw Alaska crude oil permeated the air. It was noisy too. There were loud motors on the vacuum trucks recovering oil and people shouting to be heard above the noise.

A steady stream of pickups hauled out soiled materials. Equipment and vehicles were everywhere. Oil spill cleanup crews worked methodically while government personnel, pipeline managers, and media came to look at the damaged pipe and the soiled moss mat. Security checked our ID'S several times; they were polite and I felt safe. But I couldn't get one thought out of my mind, "Why in the world would anyone do this?"

—continued on page 2



25th
anniversary

Federal Land Policy
and Management Act 1976 - 2001

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Cleanup, *cont'd*

Several people expressed a sense of helplessness. We all knew that a lot of work was being done but everyone still wanted to pitch in. The thought of the little boy plugging the hole in the dike came to mind.

Berms contained the gushing oil in pools that could be vacuumed up as fast as the oil leaked, buying time to assemble the necessary repair materials. Repair crews stopped the flow of oil at 3 a.m., October 6, using a one-of-a-kind hydraulic clamp specifically constructed for TAPS high-pressure incidents such as this. Before the clamp could be applied, a large quantity of oil had to be extracted from the pipe segment. This, combined with the vacuuming of the spilled oil, limited the affected area to less than five acres.

Once the oil pressure was lowered and the oil settled below the puncture, crews examined the damage and developed repair plans. A threaded-o-ring (TOR), a common repair technique, allowed the pipeline to restart early October 7. As of October 12, about 3,600 barrels were recovered from the estimated



Dave Perez/JPO-DNR

Several staging areas were necessary to assemble the crews and equipment needed to repair the pipeline.

6,800 barrels spilled.

Clean-up efforts continue and environmental assessments are in progress including mapping the site to determine exact locations of contamination. Additional work will include treating heavily oiled trees, excavating the oiled surface vegetation to approximately 6-12" depth after freeze-up, and developing a long-term restoration plan.

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline is certainly one of the most visible man-made objects in Alaska. It

impressed me long before I came to the Joint Pipeline Office. It is still considered an engineering marvel and people from all over the world come to see it.

Many of us train to respond to emergencies and that training paid off October 4. When I walked into the Unified Command in Fairbanks, I knew what to do, as did my agency and industry colleagues. Lessons learned from the *Exxon Valdez* disaster, Check Valve 92, and several drill exercises taught us to be better prepared, and we are.

The bottom line is, Alyeska and the government agencies responded quickly to this incident. No one was hurt, the pipeline has been permanently repaired, and the site is being cleaned. In time, there will be no indication that anything happened at this location. But you will hear about this incident forever; TAPS history is replayed each time a new incident arises. This shouldn't have happened and I certainly hope it never happens again. But we were prepared and we'll be ready if another incident occurs.

—Rhea DoBosh



Dave Perez/JPO-DNR

The natural topography at the site helped drain the oil into containment pools where it could be easily collected.



FLPMA defines BLM's mission and the value of public lands

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 has the sound of legislation that could be long, complicated and boring, but at 42 pages it's relatively short as major legislation goes. BLMers usually refer to it by its initials, pronouncing it "FLIP-MA for short. And it's anything but boring.

October 21 marks the 25th anniversary of this historic legislation. FLPMA gave the Bureau of Land Management its modern-day mission, changing the focus of the agency from grazing and land disposal to managing a full slate of resource activities joined under the concept of *multiple-use*. Multiple-use means that no one resource or use of the public lands is primary. Instead, BLM employees are directed by Congress to manage the public lands in a combination of ways that best meets the needs of the country.

Until 1976, the BLM had the impossible task of managing public lands and resources under more than 3,000 differing and sometimes conflicting land laws. With the passage of FLPMA, the land laws were consolidated and for the first time BLM had a comprehensive framework for how the wide array of public land resources should be managed.

BLM was actually formed in 1946 when the U.S. Grazing Service and the General Land Office were merged. Today, few people realize that BLM is America's largest landlord, managing more than 230 million acres of land for the American people.

BLM activities in Alaska were somewhat different from



Edward Bovy

FLPMA gave BLM responsibilities in mining, wild horse management, land use planning and other aspects of managing public lands under the multiple-use concept.

those occurring in the Lower 48. Other than a few reindeer, there has never been much of a grazing program. But BLM has been transferring vast acreages of public lands to Alaska Natives as part of implementing the Native Allotment Act (1906) and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1974). BLM also is transferring public lands to the State of Alaska as required by the Alaska Statehood Act (1958). Other BLM lands were destined to become national parks, forests or wildlife refuges through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act that passed a few years later (1980).

After FLPMA passed, Alaskans noticed some big changes.

Perhaps Section 702 had the biggest impact on Alaska as it repealed a number of land laws. Congress declared that in general the remaining public lands (with some exceptions such as the legislation just mentioned), would be retained by the federal government and managed by BLM for the benefit of all Americans. For example, in 1976 Americans could no longer go out in the woods, build a cabin and receive a patent under the Homestead Act. (However, Congress granted a ten-year extension of homesteading in Alaska through 1986.)

Prior to 1976, miners would file their claims with the state's mining district recorder, later contacting BLM to apply for survey and patent. But Section 314 of FLPMA now requires owners of unpatented lode and placer claims to annually file with BLM notices of intent to hold their claims.

Section 202 directs BLM to develop land use plans for all areas under its jurisdiction. These plans are to be developed with extensive public involvement and give land managers a framework to judge the numerous proposals BLM receives to use or cross public lands or to extract natural resources.

After 25 years, FLPMA remains the right mission for our time. Multiple-use has emerged as one of BLM's greatest strengths, ensuring our country's public lands and natural resources are managed for today and for future generations.

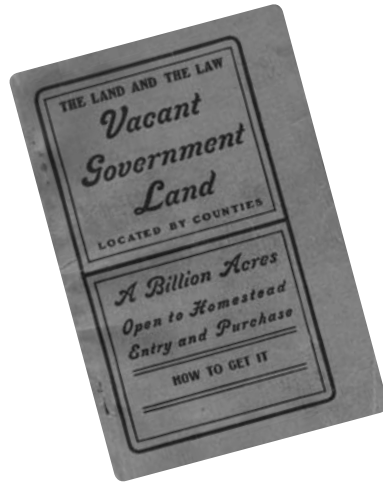
—Ed Bovy

The last homestead

Is it a Lime Village, Portage, or Sleetmute?

Kenneth Deardorff received a BLM patent to 49.97 acres of land west of Lime Village, Alaska, on May 5, 1988. It was the very last land in the United States awarded as a homestead to an applicant under the original 1862 Homestead Act. This law, passed during the Civil War under the administration of President Lincoln and five years prior to the purchase of Alaska in 1867, was designed to encourage the settlement and farming of vast federal land holdings primarily in the West. It resulted in millions of acres being claimed by private citizens.

But what about Alaska? Here, the first homesteading occurred after passage of a special act on May 14, 1898, extending the program to the new territory. There was interest to extend this land policy which had worked so well in the rest of the nation to the growing



population of Alaska, being filled up in part by would-be Klondike Gold Rush miners. Yet due to the climate and soils, Alaskan homesteading was not easy, and by 1914 fewer than 200 homestead applications had been filed. And fewer still were able to meet proof requirements to show agricultural use of the land.

But the dream, which spawned 1.3 million homestead applications in the continental

United States by 1900, didn't die in Alaska. Would-be homesteaders staked the Last Frontier with filings for homesteads until 1986.

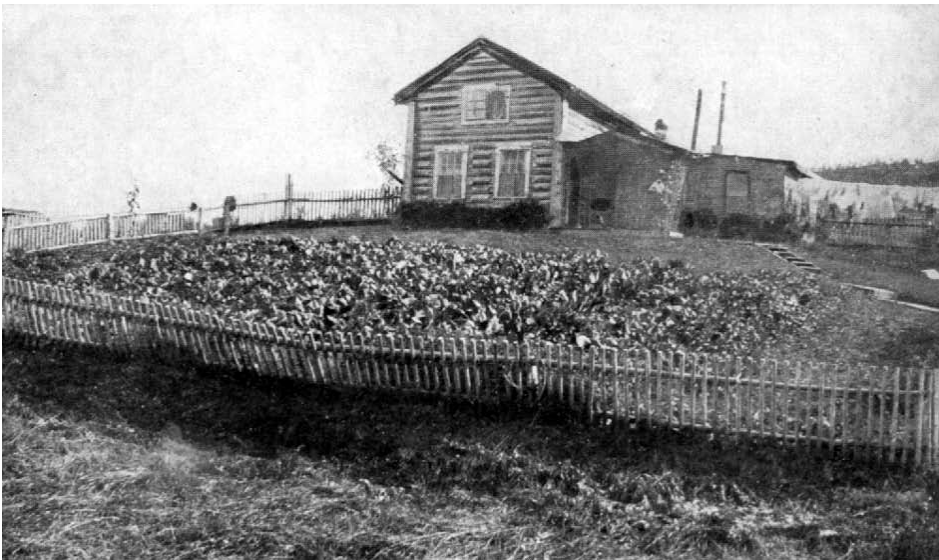
A surge of applicants came after the end of World War II. Between 1946 and 1953, Alaska had more than 3,300 homestead entries with even more following the Vietnam War.

Although Deardorff's homestead will correctly enter the history books as the last homestead in the United States, further research reveals two more interesting "last twists" in the quest to find the last homesteader.

The first involves the Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964. Prior to that event, public records show that Harvey R. Redmond applied for land at Portage, Alaska, about 47 road miles east of Anchorage. But after the quake, the land subsided and was determined to be influenced by the tides, thereby making it legally ineligible for a homestead.

Subsequently, the land was placed in the Chugach National Forest. However, by the mid-1970's the land had rebounded from the subsidence caused by the earthquake, or had silted in, or both. Since the land was now part of the national forest it was no longer possible for BLM to award it to Redmond under the 1862 Homestead Act. Instead, only a special act of Congress could correct the situation. And that's what happened.

On Dec. 15, 2000, Redmond finally got his former homestead tract by special legislation. It was part of the Department of Interior's appropriations bill for fiscal year 2001. Thus, land originally applied for as a homestead under the 1862 act was transferred to



Eugene Swanson, an African-American homesteader and veteran of the Spanish-American War, cultivated 12 acres on this 87-acre homestead near Rampart. The cabin was built in 1903 and is still in use today.

(top of page) **A 1921 guide listing land available for homesteading.**



In 1898 special legislation extended the Homestead Act to Alaska. Along the Glenn Highway, which was completed during WWII, some settlers established businesses. This 1944 photo shows the first roadhouse built at Eureka Summit soon after the road was completed in the area.

the original applicant under a different law.

But there is still one additional case that connects homesteading to the 21st century. Public records show that William C. Howerton received a patent dated Jan. 23, 2001, for 4.99 acres of land on the Hoholitna River, near the village of Sleetmute, Alaska (around 280 air miles west of Anchorage). Howerton had applied for a larger tract under the Homestead Act, only to have his claim reduced in size and awarded as a homesite under a separate section of the 1898 law that that extended homesteading to Alaska. Technically, his land is not a *homestead*

but instead a *homesite* and his case is the very last one in Alaska where a pending homestead application was awarded under another federal law.

So, although homestead laws ended officially in 1988, echoes of homesteading continued into 2001. And now with the resolution of these two recent cases, we can safely conclude that homesteading in Alaska and the rest of the nation is truly history!

—Robert King





This land is your land—keep it clean.” So said Johnny Horizon, the cartoon cowboy-like outdoorsman and symbol for BLM’s most successful effort ever to encourage good outdoor manners.

His simple message sought to enlist recreationists to protect public lands from littering, abuse and vandalism. Thirty years later, many people still remember the Johnny Horkcon image emblazoned on litter bags, publications, watches and other products. But who was he, and what did he accomplish in his all-too-brief career?

Johnny Horizon dates back to the late 1960s when BLM director Boyd Rasmusson and public affairs chief John Mattoon felt that BLM needed something big to inspire people to help BLM improve the public lands in a positive way. Both men had previous Forest Service experience and the Smokey Bear program was no doubt on their minds. They contracted an art firm and the image of Johnny Horizon was born.

In 1968, George Gurr was hired to bring the program to life. “All I had to start was a logo and a theme. I thought the only way to make it work would be to have a real person speak for the program, so I started contacting people in the entertainment world. One day I got a letter from Helen Ives, the wife of the famous folk singer, actor and entertainer Burl Ives. She said he liked the idea and wanted to help,” said Gurr.

Where’s Johnny?

BLM’s legendary spokesman achieved national acclaim, then disappeared!

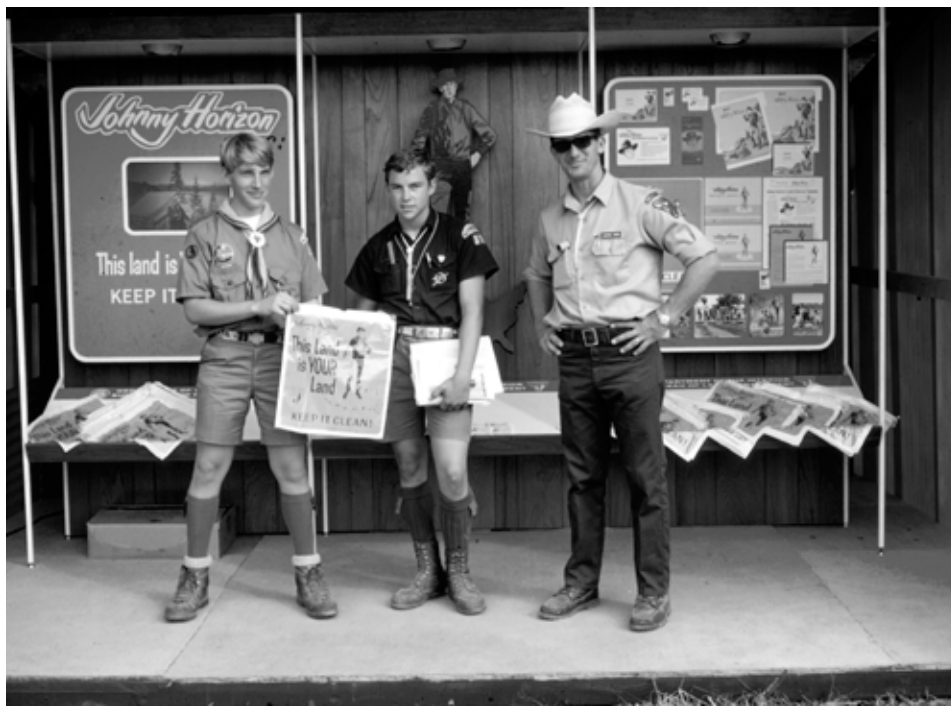
Ives later came to Washington to meet with officials. It was a match made in heaven. The following day he joined Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel at a press conference attended by members of Congress and people from the communications and entertainment industry. Ives declared, “My old guitar pickin’ finger has been good to me, and now I’m ready to offer my services in whatever way I can.”

Hickel said, “We are honored and delighted to have Mr. Ives as a partner in this significant work of litter prevention and cleanup. His ballads of the land, the people and their heritage have endeared him to an entire nation.

His musical interpretations of our national folklore clearly reflect his love and respect for the land.”

Through Ives the doors to the entertainment world opened wider. Entertainers and other people enlisted in the campaign which soon mushroomed into a widespread national citizens movement. Special Johnny Horizon concerts were held around the country as far away as Anchorage, Alaska, possibly due to the interest of Hickel who was the Alaska governor prior to becoming Secretary.

BLM contracted with



Program Director George Gurr introduces Johnny Horizon to the Boy Scouts at their 1969 national jamboree. The Boy Scouts of America later recieved the National Johnny Horizon Award for environmental improvement from Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton in 1971.





This vintage 1970 poster illustrated the teamwork of Johnny and his radio voice, volunteer Burl Ives.

Columbia Special Products to market licenses for commercial use of the Johnny Horizon character. Soon, sweatshirts, coloring books, toys, wrist watches, conservation handbooks, ecology stamp sets, kits for growing plants, and numerous outdoor goods were available. A kids' Johnny Horizon "environmental test kit" was developed by Parker Brothers and featured in the news columns of the *New York Times* and *Newsweek* magazine. Pres. Nixon signed Public Law 91-419 to prevent "the unauthorized manufacture and use of the character Johnny Horizon" and designated revenues from the licensing agreements for use in furthering the Johnny Horizon program.

BLMers embraced the program and the "Johnny Ho" message began appearing on BLM publications and at booths at state and county fairs.

Meanwhile, Ives and Gurr were busy recording dozens of

radio public service announcements for broadcast throughout the country. Stations received special certificates of appreciation signed by the Secretary of the Interior. Ives and Gurr also appeared on major TV shows of the day, including David Frost, Johnny Cash and Johnny Carson.

The response was overwhelming. "One day we got 25,000 letters, all from kids who saw us on a TV show," said Gurr, and "employees spent days stuffing Johnny Horizon decals and Outdoor Pledge cards in envelopes in the mail room to send to the kids."

Ives said that Johnny Horizon had to be more than a campaign—it had to establish a way of life by fostering a conservation ethic in the public. Over time, Johnny's message broadened from litter prevention to include being careful with fire, following fish and game laws, driving off-road vehicles in appropriate locations, and respecting private property.

The Johnny Horizon program was so successful that it soon outgrew BLM and was adopted throughout the Interior Department by many agencies. A BLM newsletter reported on a cleanup week held in American Samoa in October 1970. Spot announcements aired on radio in

English and Samoan. The governor personally donated \$360 for cash awards for groups and communities "who exemplified through hard work the spirit of Cleanup Week and Johnny Horizon." More than 15,000 Samoans picked up 500 tons of litter that week.

Ives encouraged expanding the program to urban communities, particularly in inner cities. He also supplied a theme for such efforts, choosing the words that characterized his own response, "I'll help." Instead, the Johnny Horizon program hit political obstacles and quietly faded. Ironically, this was shortly after the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), just when he was needed most and poised for even greater things.

Gurr continued his career in Oregon and later served as BLM's chief of public affairs in Alaska. "Up until even five or six years ago people, were still telling me, 'If only we had kept Johnny Horizon ... we need an identity.'"

In retrospect, it seems amazing that so much was accomplished so quickly. It's even more amazing when you consider that 30 years ago BLM was known as the "Bureau of Livestock and Mining." Yet here it was, successfully breaking new ground and advocating personal responsibility and a land ethic—all two years before the first Earth Day.

Gurr and Ives remained close friends and the two often visited as they both retired to Washington State. Ives died in 1995 at age 86. Gurr attended the funeral as a final thanks and to bid farewell to the man who gave voice to the silent cartoon character, transforming Johnny Horizon to the inspirational persona that motivated a generation of children and adults to make a difference on the public lands.

—Ed Bovy



Dalton Cache near Haines

BLM and GSA team up, keep historic cabin alive

It's a fact: the Dalton Cache resides on BLM-managed land just inside the U.S.-Canadian border. But this was not always thought to be the case. Before the modern U. S.-Canada boundary line was established in 1903, unconfirmed stories placed the boundary right through the cache. Another story, popular during Prohibition, said that if you wanted a drink, you had to go to the Canadian side of the room. Finally in 1943, the confusion was laid to rest as the survey of the Haines Highway firmly established that the cache was, after all entirely in the United States.

Built in 1896, the Dalton Cache was originally a trading post and later served as a restaurant, roadhouse, fox farm, and U.S. Customs building. Although people no longer come to imbibe, the cache has become a destination where visitors can get a taste of Klondike Gold Rush history.

The cache was built by Jack Dalton, an enterprising young man who came to the last frontier in 1890 looking to establish viable trading routes into Alaska's interior. After he established the 300-mile Dalton Trail, he constructed the Dalton Cache and other establishments along the trail. The Dalton Trail originated just outside Haines at Pyramid Harbor and went as far as Ft. Selkirk in the Yukon. The trail and trading posts were important to Alaska's history because they made the interior accessible to miners and prospectors. They saw a flurry of activity when gold was discovered at nearby Porcupine Creek and again during the Klondike Gold Rush.

Until about 20 years ago, the Dalton Cache sat somewhat neglected. Then the BLM and the General Services Administration became partners intent on restoring this historic gem. In the 1980s and most recently in 1995, BLM and GSA stabilized the cabin by disassembling it and replacing damaged logs.

This May the GSA oversaw a major overhaul, replacing rotted logs, windows and flooring. Building crews used rough cut lumber and turn-of-the-century building techniques. GSA's project manager, Tim Essebagggers, said "our intent was to maintain the historical accuracy of the cache." Construction was made possible through a \$125,000 grant written by BLM archaeologist Donna Redding. To date, more than \$200,000 has been spent on the restoration.

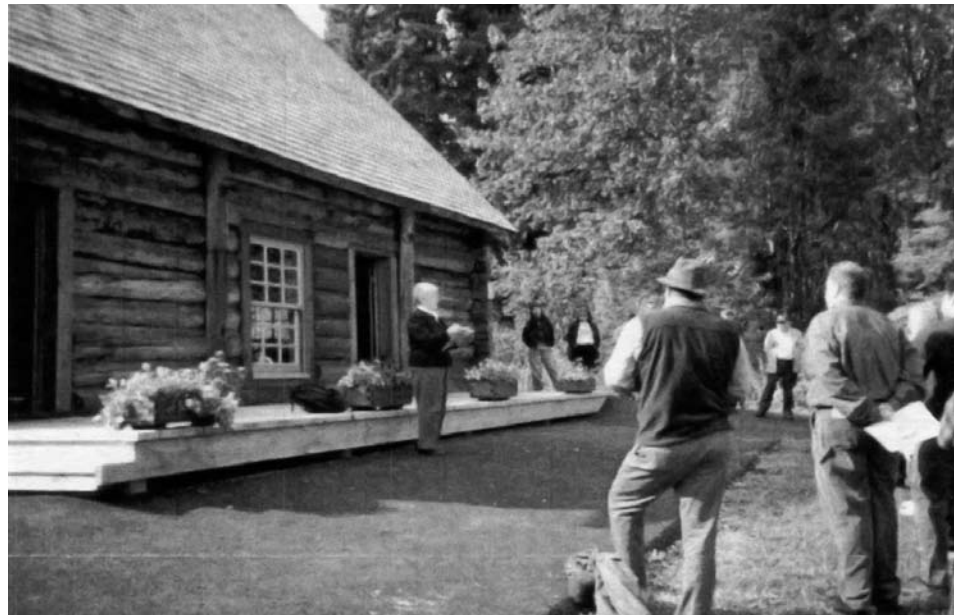
(right) **The Dalton Cache as it appeared in 1990.**

Now visitors can look inside the building while standing on a new observation deck, read the interpretive signs and perhaps imagine what life may have been like during the Klondike era.

C. J. Jones, the curator of the Sheldon Museum in Haines, authenticated the historical accuracy of the project. Redding, Essebagggers and Jones were among the more than 50 people who attended a dedication ceremony Sept. 6. They represented just a few of the many people trying to keep the history of this colorful cabin alive and available to the public.

—Danielle Allen

The Dalton Cache is located at mile 42 on the Haines Highway 40 miles west of Haines behind the U.S. Border Station.



The newly-restored Dalton Cache made its official debut at a dedication in September, looking better than ever with a viewing deck and interpretive exhibits.

British nvade Fairbanks

"Got any scoff? I left mine with my kit a klick back down the track."* Say what?

Sometimes it was tough to understand what they were saying, but it was easy to see the hard work accomplished by the young British volunteers. The group, part of a contingent of 60 volunteers and 14 adult leaders from the British Schools Exploring Society (BSES), spent nearly five weeks this summer exploring and working in the White Mountains National Recreation Area and Steese National Conservation Area.

After an orientation in Fairbanks, five groups of 16- to 20-year-old volunteers, each with several adult leaders, headed off in different directions. They assisted Northern Field Office resource specialists with a variety of projects ranging from studying wildfire intervals to mapping the location of caves and historic cabin sites.

The group on Quartz Creek Trail spent about a week assisting NFO outdoor recreation planner Randy Goodwin evaluate new techniques for minimizing environmental damage where motorized vehicle trails traverse wetlands.

On a deeply-rutted section of the scenic, 16-mile trail, the British volunteers installed 180 feet of plastic grid panels to harden the trail through a mud hole. First they prepared a level bed on which to spread a synthetic mesh membrane by laying two kinds of plastic grids on the membrane. Then they covered the grids with soil and dug drainage ditches to help dry out the trail.

*American-English translation: "Have you got any munchies on you? I left mine with my camping gear a kilometer (0.6 miles) down the trail."



Craig McCaa

British volunteers install grid panels that will allow off-highway vehicles to use a section of trail in the White Mountains without damaging it.

Vegetation will grow through the grids, which will hold everything in place as off-road vehicles pass over wet sections of the trail.

While the group on Quartz Creek Trail dug and toiled in muddy tundra, the other volunteer groups were also experiencing their share of Alaska adventures, some of which became more exciting than planned. Leo Nathan, a university student in Edinburgh, Scotland, was part of a group floating down Birch Creek National Wild and Scenic River. He emerged from his tent early one morning to find himself face-to-face with a black bear that had been raiding the party's food during the night. Nathan raised his arms and talked quietly to the bear, which charged to within a few feet of him, snorted, and ran off.

"That woke me up for the day!" Nathan said. "But it was reassuring that the advice I'd been given on how to react to

bears kicked in, and it worked."

Another group found itself in trouble on Beaver Creek National Wild and Scenic River after bad weather delayed its helicopter food drop for several days. The group had camped on an island which began to shrink as rainstorms caused the river to rise. When the helicopter finally arrived, it did more than deliver food—it evacuated the volunteers from their flooding campsite.

A few misadventures aside, this year's expedition went well, according to Tony Whiting, the gregarious BSES expedition leader. Whiting said Alaska offered some distinct logistical advantages when compared to the organization's expeditions to other far-flung destinations such as the Amazon and Kyrgyzstan.

"You do speak English, to some extent," he said with a broad smile. He said BSES usually has to plan everything itself

—continued on page 11



Frontier Flashes

News from around Alaska



Recent events in New York have affected the entire country, including BLM. Many BLM-ers are part of the National Guard and some have been called to service. Other BLM-ers will fill in for them in their absence.

Visitors to BLM and other federal offices will notice more changes designed to improve security. Parking areas may be relocated or restricted, more doors are locked, and employees wear identification badges. Visitors may have to sign in or provide identification when entering government buildings.

On Oct. 7, **Alaska's Type 1 Interagency Type 1 incident Management Team** flew to New York to begin an assignment of up to 30 days to assist in the recovery efforts at the World Trade Center.

The team, which is usually called to manage large wildland fires, was assigned to support the New York Fire Department in planning and logistical functions. The inter-agency team is made up of 36 members, representing federal, state and local agencies. Daily updates on the team's activities are available on the internet at:

<http://akteam.ak.blm.gov>

Latest Conveyance Data Released

The following table summarizes land conveyance actions through September 30, 2001.

	<u>FY 2001</u>	<u>total to date</u>
ANCSA interim conveyance and patent (acres)	629,774	37,460,479
State of Alaska tentative approval and patent (acres)	178,957	90,316,943
Native allotment parcels processed	515	

Bureau of Reclamation Helps BLM Evaluate Campgrounds

GLENNALLEN. Public lands and facilities should be available for everyone's enjoyment. But sometimes physical barriers make that enjoyment unnecessarily challenging, or even off-limits to some people. At least a quarter of the American population needs some type of accessibility accommodation—a figure that is expected to grow as our senior population swells.

Congress recognized this 30 years ago when it passed the Architectural Barriers Act and subsequent legislation—Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act—and, more recently, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

BLM wants all people to benefit fully from the services, programs and facilities it provides on public lands and has partnered with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to determine where improvements may be needed. In 1988 the BOR began development of a small internal software system designed to aid staff in managing data. Today, the BOR's Accessibility Data Management System (ARMS) is being used by BLM and other federal agencies as a means of devising manageable steps for achieving accessibility.

This summer, a pair of BOR/ARMS team members traveled to Alaska to conduct an accessibility evaluation project at BLM's Sourdough Creek, Paxson Lake, Tangle Lakes, and Brushkana Creek campgrounds, as well as waysides located at the Delta National Wild & Scenic River Trailhead and Clearwater Creek. Ann Gomeza-Haynes and Al Bernstein carefully measured and documented heights, distances, angles and countless features in each location with the help of an assortment of devices. The resulting reports will be used by BLM to plan modifications where needed.

To learn more about the ADMS, visit the Bureau of Reclamation's website at: <http://www.pnusbr.gov/adms/index.shtml> and for more on accessibility issues, the U.S. Access Board website at: <http://www.access-board.gov/>



Public Lands Day Volunteers Repair Trails at Campbell Tract

ANCHORAGE. Freelance outdoor writer Bill Sherwonit led a creekside chat on the benefits of nature journaling during National Public Lands Day. This year the national event was celebrated September 29.

Sherwonit explained he takes a journal along on every hike or outdoor excursion to record sights, sounds, and events that eventually find their way into articles. "Keeping a journal is a way of tracking our lives," he explained, "Journaling is just as important for people who don't consider themselves writers. When you keep a journal, you pay more attention to things."

Each year volunteer instructors like Sherwonit help make National Public Lands Day a success. In addition to nature journaling, BLM's Campbell Creek Science Center and 14 private and public sector partners offered numerous fun, free activities throughout the day. More than 150 residents came out to work on trail projects in the morning or participate in educational activities at the Science Center in the afternoon.

Cyclists Travel Public Lands to Raise Money for AIDS Vaccine

More than 1,400 bicyclists traveled 500 miles and crossed two mountain ranges in BLM's Glennallen District the week of August 20. Riders gathered pledges of donations for each mile ridden and averaged about 100 miles a day. The group stayed in "tent cities" set up in previously disturbed locations along the route under the special recreation permit authorization issued by BLM.



British Invasion, *continued from page 9*

so he appreciated the hard work of Goodwin and the other NFO specialists who had helped coordinate the expedition's trips.

Whiting also noted that there were occasional challenges in interacting with Alaskans, whom he found to be decidedly more laid-back than the British. "Brits drive fast, talk fast, and do everything fast. In Alaska," he said, "it's more West Coast, almost a *mañana* approach."

Whiting has made numerous trips to Alaska, including BSES expeditions in 1995 and 1999. At a barbeque in Fairbanks to celebrate the end of this year's expedition, he said he loves coming back to Alaska, although his wife complains that he keeps disappearing for the summer.

She may be dismayed when she learns that he is already talking with NFO staff about returning in 2003 with another BSES expedition.

—Craig McCaa

Frontier People



Mary Figarelle returned to Alaska in April as the **BLM's Tok Office** field manager. The former realty specialist comes from BLM's Winnemucca office in Nevada. Prior to that she worked at BLM's Anchorage Field Office in the realty/lands program.

Pam Stuart began her duties as **special agent-in-charge** in August. She works with four rangers and oversees BLM-Alaska's law enforcement program. Stuart previously worked as a special agent in BLM's Montana and Arizona state offices.



Christopher DeWitt is the new supervisor of BLM's **Juneau Mineral Information Center**. He will also serve as a point of contact between BLM and the state legislature. DeWitt, a geologist by training, also has experience in engineering, construction and hazardous materials cleanup.



2001: not much activity for firefighters

Although it was brief, Alaska's 2001 wildland fire season managed to produce some noteworthy fires.

The most active period, June 20 to July 3, spawned four fires that required incident management teams to suppress them. A fifth fire burned more than 100,000 acres in a limited suppression area.

Otherwise, fire activity was slow. Preliminary end-of-the-year figures from the Alaska Inter-agency Coordination Center show 349 fires burned 216,230 acres. That's well below the 10-year average of 622 fires and 755,500 acres.

Only 28 lightning fires occurred which burned just over 10,000 acres. The 321 human-caused fires burned nearly 206,000 acres. Four of the five "problem" fires were human-caused. Two fires in the Tanana

Flats (Survey Line, 118,760 acres, and Fish Creek, 84,730 acres) accounted for 94 percent of the total acreage burned.

Two major fires occurred on the Kenai Peninsula. The Kenai Lake Fire, an escaped prescribed fire, burned 3,260 acres. Lightning sparked the Mystery Hill Fire that burned 750 acres. The Red Fox Fire in Tok was only 150 acres, but it burned through a neighborhood and destroyed two residential structures and six outbuildings before it was contained.

Fifty-one emergency firefighter crews were hired during the season, 20 of them for fires in the Lower 48. Emergency firefighters earned nearly \$1.9 million in wages from the federal government. The state payroll for EFF workers has not been compiled.

Alaska brought 13 Type 1 crews and about 350 other fire-

fighters and support personnel from the Lower 48. In addition to the 20 Type 2 crews, Alaska sent the four Type 1 crews and 465 other personnel to fires in the Lower 48.

Alaska's Type 1 Incident Management Team drew a 14-day fire assignment to the Horse Creek Fire in northeastern Oregon in mid-August, and then on Oct. 7 began an assignment of up to 30 days with the World Trade Center in New York.

—Andy Williams



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BLM-Alaska Frontiers is published quarterly
in February, May, August and November.

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BLM-AK-GI-94-005-1120-912